



## **Envision Arlington Diversity Task Group**

Date: March 30, 2023

Time: 6:45 pm - 9:00 pm (official meeting start at 7PM)

Remote Participation, via Zoom: <https://town-arlington-ma-us.zoom.us/j/85713651797>

### **Agenda** (times are approximate)

- 1. Land Acknowledgement, Review of Mission Statement and Group Meeting Protocols (5 mins.)**
- 2. Review of March 9 meeting minutes and updates re: on-going initiatives (20 mins.)**
- 3. Continued discussion on the direction and strategy of DTG, including the role of the DTG chair and the process for selecting a new chair (90 mins.)**
- 4. New Business (5 mins.)**

**Attendees: Rebecca Gruber, Jane Flores, Michelle Oshima, Elizabeth Dray, Sarah McKinnon, Stephanie Ettinger de Cuba, Katell Guellec, Laurie Key, Mona Mandal**

Updates of ongoing initiatives:

- Letter sent to Stewart Ikeda, Arlington Commission for Arts & Culture in support of student climate futures project. Not sure if the Commission has met with the Park and Recreation Commission yet.
- Discussion of upcoming town elections. There was interest in the collection of data in two areas related to our school district: Involvement of School Resource Officers and how many IEPs for special education include outside professionals hired by families (advocates, attorneys, neuropsychologists, educational consultants).

- Discussed the issue of bullying in the school district in light of recent news reports and whether this seems to be a priority in APS. An Arlington resident wrote an article for Commonwealth Magazine on the issue of bullying from a personal standpoint.
  - Link to local CBS news report:  
<https://www.cbsnews.com/boston/news/i-team-school-bullying-cases-underreported-massachusetts-social-media/>
  - Link to Commonwealth Magazine article:  
<https://commonwealthmagazine.org/opinion/five-actions-we-can-take-to-address-bullying/>
- Reviewed and discussed the draft text for a flyer soliciting applicants for DTG's appointment to the Arlington Civilian Police Advisory Commission. Will help to clarify that this is a volunteer position, as well as estimates of the time commitment required. But time commitments and other details will be determined once all the committee members are selected and the work begins. Also discussed using clear language indicating that this person will represent DTG, be a founding member. The hope is to bring some final candidates to a future DTG meeting. It's also possible that some candidates may come to DTG via other groups in town who have been talking with interested people. **To Do: DTG members need to start talking within their networks to get the best candidates. To Do: Michelle, Sarah, and Elizabeth will continue to finalize the flyer for Rebecca to distribute to the DTG email list before Thursday, April 6.**

Continued discussion on the direction and strategy of DTG, including the role of the DTG chair and the process for selecting a new chair:

- No one has yet expressed interest in becoming chair/co-chair.
- Works really well when there are at least two co-chairs.
- Benefits of DTG being a town entity.
- Until a new chair is found, DTG could continue but temporarily suspend meetings OR continue to meet until a new chair is found.
- Membership has dwindled over the last 18 months. COVID and other dynamics have had an impact on our work. There may be more opportunities, including online, for people to get involved in other organizations and activities. People are still engaged but perhaps DTG isn't always the vehicle for their engagement.
- Having a space where people can be vulnerable is important. Meeting in person also fosters connection and the sense of not being alone in Town. The chairs have created a place where people feel valued and welcome.
- DTG has been an important springboard, an incubation chamber.
- What kind of a space is this?
  - A place where we show up to talk and connect and share. Sometimes there may be

motivation to go work on a specific project with a smaller group. Or do we want more organized activism?

- Whatever the space is, people need to be willing to put their efforts into what they say is important to them.
- There isn't a requirement to have a chair or a more formal structure. So we could function without a chair and share the admin responsibilities within a subcommittee -- forming an agenda, inviting speakers. We also could rotate running the meeting. Think about the most basic structure needed to contain our work while also allowing for more fluid evolution of DTG.
- Can we have an ongoing Google doc open for people to add things they would like on the agenda. What things do we need to do so the space exists? What do we need to do to ensure that new people, new voices join so that DTG can be the node where people connect.
- Elizabeth interviewed Rebecca and using the DTG mission as a framework created a document with what is essential to creating the space for us and also for welcoming and encouraging others to join the space.
- It's important to reach out to people who come and then don't return to find out why.

Next steps to make new model

1. Everyone
  - a. Read this document [Thoughts about DTG Structure](#)
  - b. Think about what is essential to the space - the bare minimums
  - c. How can those responsibilities be shared
  - d. How to give access to information like gmail, zoom info etc. that feels safe and decentralizes
2. Elizabeth will hold an April 13th meeting.